

atomic ranch

MIDCENTURY MARVELS



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WINTER 2011



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The current owners of this Studio City, Calif., ranch retrofitted a former fireplace and barbecue with a bar and a bookcase insert after an earthquake took the chimney out. Care was taken to match the grid of the new patio to the interior bluestone tile floor, and the original windows were retained. Furnishings include chairs from Loja Designs and a cube table by Stephen Fleitz. Story page 36.



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meanwhile... back at the ranch



his summer I accepted an invitation to present a lecture and slideshow as part of the Indian Village Home Tour of Fort Wayne, Ind. Who could pass up an opportunity to visit the home of Jimmy Kimmel's favorite midsize city mayor? To say I had no expectations is not a disparagement; I simply did not know what I'd find there. But having been impressed with the quality of midcentury architecture in Cincinnati, I should have realized that Fort Wayne would have good homes, too.

Angie Quinn, of ARCH, the tour organizer, was my taxi driver/historian/expert guide, and before the presentation she drove me to some of the city's homes and neighborhoods. Most surprising was Michael Graves' first residential commission, the 1971 Hanselmann House, up for sale at an extremely attractive price. A futuristic stacked white cube in an upscale but traditional neighborhood, I imagined it would sell quickly to an architectural enthusiast.

Completely at the other end of the spectrum, I viewed a Lustron nestled unobtrusively among some modest postwar homes. By the end of my stay, we tallied a total of three of the porcelain-clad prefabs, including

one with an extra Lustron wing and attached garage. Although we didn't have any historical backup, Angie and I spotted a home I'd swear is a Usonian.

The Indian Village Tour homes present a story line that has been repeated often in Atomic Ranch: it was a subdivision conceived in the '20s, but many plots lay fallow until after the war when an enterprising builder offered a variety of home styles to returning GIs. Developer John Worthman used streamlined construction methods, varied the details for uniqueness and annually introduced new designs in ranch and contemporary styles. The eight brave owners (have you ever opened your house to a tour?) shared homes ranging from a 1929 Tudor revival to a 1956 ranch that evidenced solid quality and simplicity.

Bob Gould and Thom Johnston's custom Fort Wayne ranch.



A casual flip through our issues might give the impression that featured homes are perfect and every room is photo-worthy. A closer reading would reveal sad initial conditions, and that it's a long process of education and appreciation of original elements before our cameras arrive to document the beauty

and general wonderfulness. I liken it to the thought that, of the millions of Mustangs Ford has produced, how many make it to magazine immortality? Not that many, and the same holds true for the millions of ranches built against the ones that garner our attention. The good basic ranch ingredients are out there, everywhere; they're just waiting for knowledgeable, enthusiastic owners to combine the old and new into charming homes.

Following my slide show at a community center, it was a short walk through a field of fireflies (remarkably like the ones at Disney's Blue Bayou) to a buffet held at the adjacent restored 1827 home of Miami Chief Richardville. A pretty impressive two-story, all-brick structure, built at a time when most residents lived in log cabins and cottages. Angie made a persuasive case that Chief Richardville was the first of a long line of forward-thinking modernist homebuilders in Indiana; after my time there, I'm inclined to agree with her.

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modernwisdom



A passerby stopped at my home to tell me how beautiful it was and mentioned that it was like the homes in your magazine. She thought it was good enough that I should send you a picture. I hope you like it.

It was built in 1960 on hillside farmland we used to own; about eight years ago I had a chance to acquire it. There is a pond behind it and a whopping view of the lower acreage. I am solely responsible for the upkeep of the landscape. The interior is untouched from the original 1960s decor, and shows it, but that's OK with me.

John Emerson Brown

Mt. Sterling, Ohio

* I have several of your magazines that I have enjoyed reading. I was hoping to find at least a few listings for businesses that cater to those of us with houses that belong to the era you feature. My husband and I are contemplating an addition on the rear of our 1950s shake-roofed ranch in Phoenix. The few builders we have consulted are very quick to say No when we asked if they could match the exterior brick. Do you have any suggestions?

Stephanie Seyer

We have an upcoming story about a couple who used the original brick from their rear facade to clad the sides of their addition, then switched to tan Roman brick for details on the back. As far as matching yours,

it depends upon what kind of brick you have, and there are regional varieties that come into play. For instance, in our own Portland ranch, the Roman brick size is still being made, but not in the color we have. If you send a good photo, we might be able to offer some resources—but no guarantee.

—ar editor

* I found some fun 1950s postcards featuring Googie architecture at My Favorite Place, a junk shop in Atlanta where I have discovered many midcentury bargains over the years. This one is of Grace Lutheran Church in St. Petersburg, Fla.

I know it would be an entirely different business venture, but I think it would be a great idea to see Atomic Ranch partner with HGTV on a television program. So many times I see home renovations where they take an unspoiled midcentury modern home and renovate it into something it was never meant to be, destroying the charm in the process. I cringe when I see designers on a low budget stucco over a gorgeous stone fireplace wall or tear out original tiled bathrooms



that could easily be saved, simply because they look “dated.” If only there were a television show that could express the concerns of midcentury enthusiasts and explain the importance and value in preserving these homes, instead of just gutting them or worse, tearing them down.

I’m certain you have your hands full publishing this fantastic magazine as well as the upcoming second Atomic Ranch book, but should you ever find the time, a regular series show would be a dream come true. I think HGTV would be surprised to find out how many

morewisdom

midcentury modern fans are out there who would be interested in seeing such a show produced.

Vince Grindstaff

Atlanta, Ga.

* Here is a shot of our 1953 Spartan Manor 28-footer, on the road for four years now after a two-year renovation. It has been to 18 states—not too bad for such an old gal. The tow vehicle is a 1956 Lincoln custom station wagon. No, it was never a hearse; we converted it into a wagon from a sedan 13 years ago, and it has been driven 31,000 miles since the conversion.

The renovation of the trailer included gutting it carefully, new mechanicals, rebuilt axles, etc., then reinstalling the original cabinets in not quite the original floor plan so that we could fit a king-size bed in back for us and our Great Danes. Rearranging and omitting some cabinets also allowed us to add six windows from a parts trailer to open up the interior for a true MCM light and airy feeling. Black and white checkerboard floor, vintage cloth for the curtains and a lime green laminate counter and backsplash finish out the feeling.



For anyone interested in vintage trailers, there is a club, Tin Can Tourists; their meets, trailers and people are fun.

Phil G.D. Schaefer

Indianapolis

* Your magazine provides welcome relief from the mundane. I must take exception, however, with your recent piece on travel trailers. As a partial trailer enthusiast and admirer of things atomic, your choices of the Spartan and the Airstream were super mundane and boring. Airstream? They should call those things Mainstreams.

Next time, include Holiday House, really the midcentury marvels you were attempting to convey. Built for only two years, they are rare, atomic and have the dynamic tension that Airstreams only dream about. Of two models they made, only one of the Geographic exists; check out 1960prototype.com.

Eric Bickert

South Lake Tahoe, Calif.



Bardy Azadmard, who restored the sole Geographic from its rat-infested state 10 years ago, shared this photo of the unique travel trailer, designed by Chuck Pelly in 1959. His website details the history and his restoration. For a fun intro to vintage trailers and unique tow vehicles, we recommend Silver Palaces by photographer Douglas Keister, available through the AR Bookstore; see page 32.

—ar editor

* I always wanted an art space separate from our 1948 ranch house, a place of my own—man cave if you will. I was researching prefab studio structures, and although they were really cool, a bit pricey. One day I



found this 1967 Streamliner on craigslist.

We had a concrete slab poured for it, and a contractor friend built a skirt around it and helped me gut it. I really didn't have any need for the kitchen, bedroom and bathroom, so we took it all out, put in bamboo floors and it was pretty much ready to go. I had bookshelves built, and wheat pasted art over cabinets and closets. The only thing left is the custom couch; my wife is working on the cushions, which are made from old apparel I designed at Nike.

We love it; hope you do as well.

Brandon Walsh

Portland, Ore.

* The children's show "Willa's Wild Life" on the Qubo channel is the perfect show to train your little one's eye to an atomic aesthetic. Check it out! [qubo.com/index.php?path=videos&id=10]

I enjoy your magazine, and though I don't have an atomic ranch of my own, I love dreaming as I flip through the pages of your fabulous publication.

Lorelei Pullig

Richmond, Texas

* In 1954 my folks participated in a nationwide contest put on by the "Home" television show. They had Jones and Emmons from L.A. design a home and had a contest to see who would build it. Two builders won: my dad and Joe Eichler of Northern California. Dad built his in Kansas City. The Eichler homes were built in Terra Linda, Marin County. There is an article about it on a site called KC Modern.

I grew up in one home Dad built in the late '40s in K.C. Then he built our family home on Belinder, which was (I believe) designed by Dave Runnells, the K.C. architect; extremely unique and a great home. Dad now lives in Carmel Valley, Calif.

Donald Drummond

Kcmodern.com has photos and info on the senior Drummond's work, in addition to a republished article from the Eichler Network on the House that Home Built contest.

—ar editor

* Aloha! In your Summer 2011 issue, publisher Jim Brown mentions that there is not much crossover between readers of *Hot Rod* and *Atomic Ranch*. Well, I have to disagree. My shop, Daddy Katz, is a Kustom Kulture Shop where we sell retro and vintage items, including furniture, lamps, accessories, clothing, tiki, hot rod parts—and your magazine! We have weekly Kruze-ins, art jams, scooter shows and bicycle shows. We are also located in a town that has many midcentury homes. Believe it or not, we have a huge crossover of people that drive hot rods, and purchase midcentury items.

Bill Winger

Dayton, Ohio

* While reading the Summer 2011 issue of AR, I could not help noticing the similarities between the bathrooms in the Cincinnati/Amberley Village ranch



[page 44 and left] and my home's less high-end bath, with their original Jack 'n' Jill sinks and modesty partition near the toilet. I have what appears to be the same laminate countertops as the Cincinnati peach and salmon bath—I believe it was called



Cracked Ice—and my sinks have the original Moen chrome faucets with Lucite handles.

I did not like the solid birch laminate partition, and because it had suffered significant delamination from what appeared to have been a longstanding leak

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from a faulty toilet seal, I removed it. There was enough good wood to fashion a new end piece for the counter. I've attached a before and after photo, but then promise no more, as I know how busy you must be with your magazine production.

Steve Wilen

Walla Walla, Wash.

* I almost fell off [my chair] when reading the line "There's probably not a lot of crossover between readers of *Hot Rod* and *Atomic Ranch*." Back in the late '60s/early '70s, each month *Hot Rod* brought all this little kid's heroes into his home. My buddies and I would ride our go-karts and make believe we were Big John Mazmanian, Roger Lindamood, Charlie Allen, Candies & Hughes, 'TV' Tommy Ivo, etc. I always thought that if I could bottle the smell of nitro, bleach and M&H rubber, I'd have the ultimate men's cologne.

My wife and I live in your typical East Coast center hall, brick-front, two-story colonial; boring. Ah, but our weekend home is a small ranch, on the waterfront, right outside of Atlantic City. Only so much I can do with the bones, but I'd like to think that my renovations have produced a kind of bastardized East Coast version of a Cliff May. It's stuffed with Hey-Wake, Kagan and Nakashima.

I'm also the executor of my parents' estate. Included is the home I grew up in, a time capsule 1955 ranch, complete with plaster walls, hardwood floors and pink and black tile. Real estate here is a tough sell. The house is a 30-minute commute by train to NYC, so if you know anyone...

In closing, this little kid remembers the exquisite anticipation felt checking the mailbox for the impending arrival of *Hot Rod* and *Car Craft* (you gotta admit, sister publication *Car Craft* was a bit hipper). That same anticipation is now felt when looking out for the next issue of *Atomic Ranch*.

Chas. Sergewick

Toms River, N.J.

* I just wanted to point your attention to the destruction of a wonderful midcentury home located in a suburb of Houston. Here's a link about it [when it

was for sale in 2010]: swamplot.com/wright-style-a-long-view-in-sugar-creek/2010-08-13.

I think it's a shame and I wish there was more awareness of these homes. Houston has great examples, yet many are torn down for the lot value; I'm sure you see this all over the country. I'm glad, at least, that there are magazines like yours that point out the uniqueness of these homes, especially to those from younger generations, like myself.

On the extreme higher end of the market is the supposedly only Frank Lloyd Wright home built in Houston. Hopefully, they won't rip this one down. http://search.har.com/engine/12020-Tall-Oaks-St-Bunker-Hill-Village-TX-77024_HAR71442672.htm

Mitchell Kilby

* Just a quick note to tell you how much we enjoyed seeing our early-'70s ranch house on Home Page. I received my fall issue as Hurricane Irene hit Vermont, causing waterborne destruction and community upset like I never thought I'd see in my lifetime. We were fortunate, as our house was one of the lucky ones.

Keeping in mind foremost how much my heart goes out to my neighbors and fellow Vermonters still coping with the aftereffects, it was simply nice to have a little uptick during this very difficult time, with your magazine giving credence to how very important hearth and home is to so many people. Thanks for a little happiness during some anxious times.

Kathy Corey

Rutland, Vt.

* I wanted to send a wee letter to you about the "Pet Pix" section in the latest issue. I love it, and in particular I love to see midcentury in action. The magazine always photographs perfect rooms, conspicuously devoid of animals, humans included; I know sometimes there are humans, but they do look staged. So, well done on bringing reality to the magazine world.

Also, I loved all the "constructive" wisdom. I see that it's not only this single female trying to make the ends of a dream meet.

Linda Poirier

Ontario, Canada

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©Nat Reed

* There just isn't an abundance of midcentury homes to be found in our area of the Deep South—my husband and I live in your basic 1970s brick ranch on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. But being increasingly



inspired by each amazing issue of Atomic Ranch, we decided to retrofit our typical (boring), uncomfortable and thus rarely used wicker-clad sun porch into a more livable space.

Since our budget didn't allow for an actual midcentury sofa and chair, we substituted affordable modern pieces for those anchors, and then accessorized with true vintage items—consignment store Danish modern

tables, a working sunburst clock uncovered in a South Louisiana antique shop for an unbelievable \$15, a 1960s teak table lamp from a shop on Etsy and original 1950s movie posters found while cruising eBay. The old rusty stop sign, confiscated from my father-in-law's farming shed, was the most affordable—free. But I believe the colorful and kitschy rendering by a local artist of the belovedly evil Mr. Drysdale from "The Beverly Hillbillies" is what ties the room together. We lucked upon this painting first and designed the remainder of the room around it.

The price tag for the entire transformation was around \$1,800, proving that it is actually possible to design on a dime. We now have a very comfortable and fun added space, of which our very picky tabby cat wholeheartedly approves!

Kathryn Gray

Long Beach, Miss.

Write us at editor@atomic-ranch.com
 or send a note to Atomic Ranch, Publishing Office,
 3125 SE Rex St., Portland, OR 97202.
We'll print the good ones.

"I cannot pretend to feel impartial about colors.
I rejoice with the brilliant ones
and am genuinely sorry for the poor browns."
—Winston Churchill

"I previously owned and restored the Sculptured House; it's kind of mushroom shaped and was in the movie 'Sleeper,' " says John Huggins offhandedly. The home he refers to is vaguely identifiable to anyone who's seen Woody Allen's 1973 comedy about a cryogenically frozen New Yorker who wakes up 200 years later. The Charles Deaton-designed structure, located on Genesee Mountain outside Denver, served as both futuristic architecture and its cylindrical elevator as the inspiration for the Orgasmatron device in the film.

At the time Huggins bought the home in 1999, it had never been lived in and had an unfinished, decaying interior. The tech entrepreneur poured money and love into it and used it as a weekend house before selling it five years later.

"I had a lot of fun doing that and filling it with midcentury furniture," he says. "That was a full-on rescue; it was uninhabited and literally falling down. There is a similarity of spirit, but the Sculptured House was more a work of art than a livable home; our present house is very much a home."

custom built

The house he refers to is in the Hilltop neighborhood of Denver, built in 1966 by Donald Roark for commercial clients who owned a chain of local stores and lived there for only 10 years. Still practicing in his 80s, Roark visited the home several times since Huggins' renovation and seemed thrilled that someone appreciated his design enough to return it to a quasi-original state.

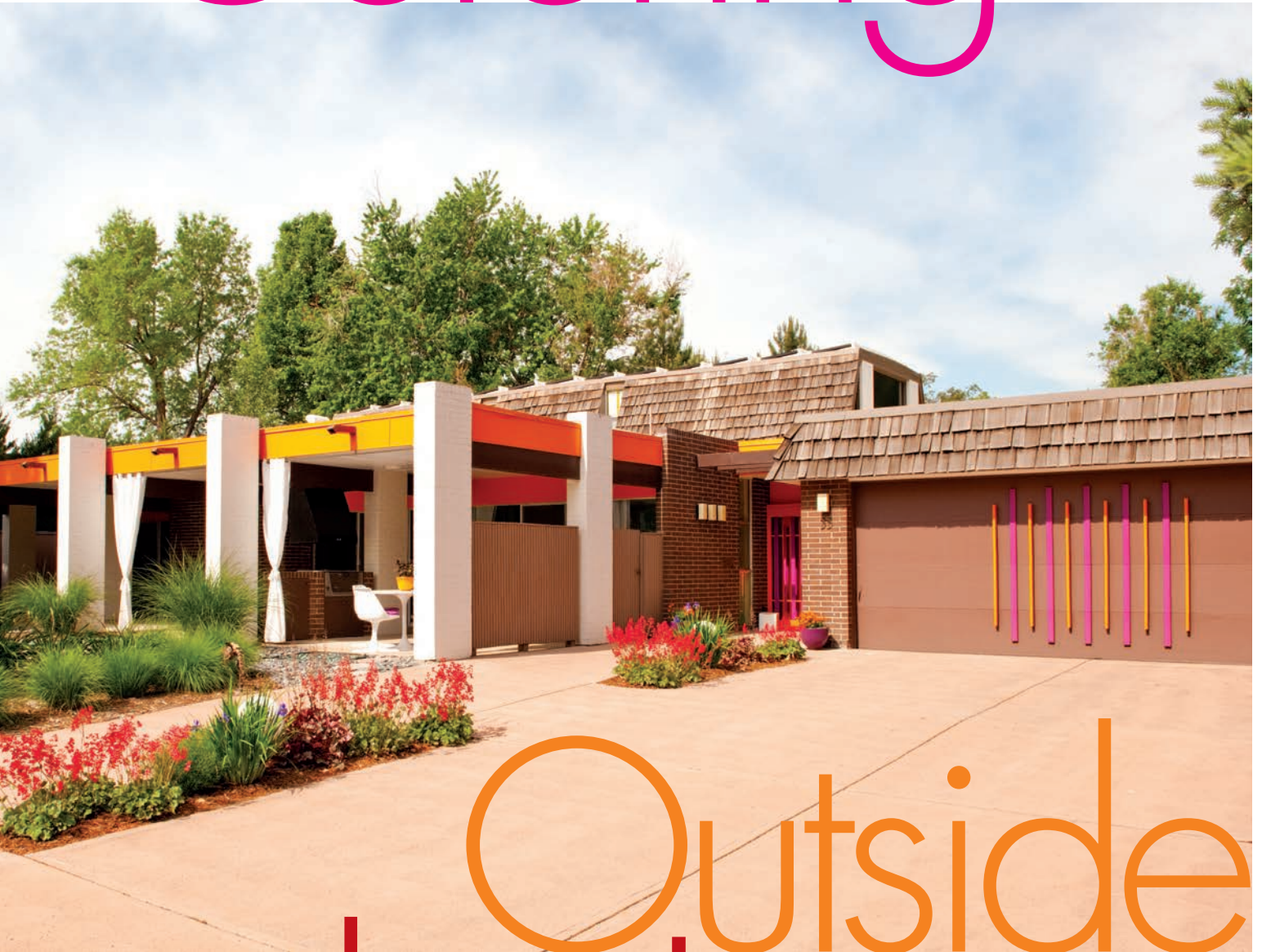
Hilltop is a mix of prewar traditionals and postwar ranch homes on large lots. About 10 years ago, houses started to be torn down and replaced with McMansions, though Huggins' block is still unsullied. When he and his wife, Monica Martinez, first saw the home, it took some squinting to get past the deferred maintenance issues.



text Michelle Gringeri-Brown

photography David Mejias

Coloring



Outside the Lines

"I'd seen a picture of the original kitchen online, but the front yard was so thick with vegetation that you couldn't walk through it; all you could see from the street was the garage. It hadn't been lived in for about two years," Huggins explains.

But where her husband saw a tempting project, Martinez was less enamored. "It was cobwebby and I didn't get its appeal," she says. "We weren't yet married, so I just considered it to be John's house that he was thinking of renovating."

back to the future

The 2007 project took six months (Martinez's recollection is closer to a year). "Our renovation was almost a conservation approach—to do the least amount necessary to return the house to its original state, or in a couple of cases, make it more livable for us," says Huggins.

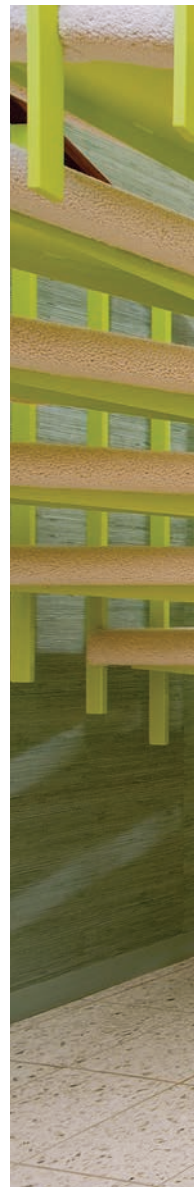
Exterior changes included bringing the front door forward 12' and turning that brick-walled former outdoor space into an indoor gallery. They also replaced a fixed frosted glass panel with a slider to the back yard. The decorative elements on the garage door are new, too—sort of: original drawings show them over a fireplace inside but they were either removed by a previous owner or not installed after all.



Upstairs is one bedroom, a large TV room and a sewing room converted to an office. The couple had an existing sofa reupholstered to coordinate with the original orange and pink fabric on the built-in seating in the TV room. The ceiling fixtures are vintage Prescolites.

Opposite, top: The original couches in the living room's sunken conversation pit have been reupholstered in practical vinyl, and the vintage Pucci print-covered coffee table base has a new glass top.

John Huggins explains that the main part of the house is organized with columns and beams running from the front of the house to the back, where they're articulated. They form an organizing grid, with the kitchen one-bay wide and the living room triple that. Architect Donald Roark couldn't recall if the terrazzo tile floor, opposite, was original, but the brick piers have always been painted. Just past the spiral staircase are two vintage Florence Knoll Parallel Bar chairs and a reissued Isamu Noguchi Cyclone table. A quirky water feature is built into the steps at the end of the room; the couple decorate this area with multiple aluminum Christmas trees for the holidays.





"Our renovation was almost a conservation approach—
to do the least
amount necessary to
return the house
to its original state."

Huggins and Martinez chose blue grass cloth for the wall in the atrium where the architect's plans indicated the material had hung, although originally in gold. A Gio Ponti vanity from Hotel Parco dei Principi in Rome, manufactured by Cassina in 1964, was purchased at the LA Modernism show. On the wall, artwork by Charles Ragland Bunnell, a regional modernist, hangs from a Gallery System display track.

The location of the original outdoor kitchen, with its built-in Majestic Char-Grill and Burke table and chairs, seems to be a hybrid of the prewar neighborly front porch and the postwar private patio.



Those original drawings and Huggins' architectural archeology were invaluable for choosing colors and replacing missing elements. He took down light fixtures and switch plates to look for previous finishes, and scraped through paint layers on the interior masonry. They found bits and pieces of old wallpaper and original tile, which drove the color palette of bright pinks, lime greens and blues. For consistency and contrast, beams were painted chocolate, and walls, ceilings and brick piers white.

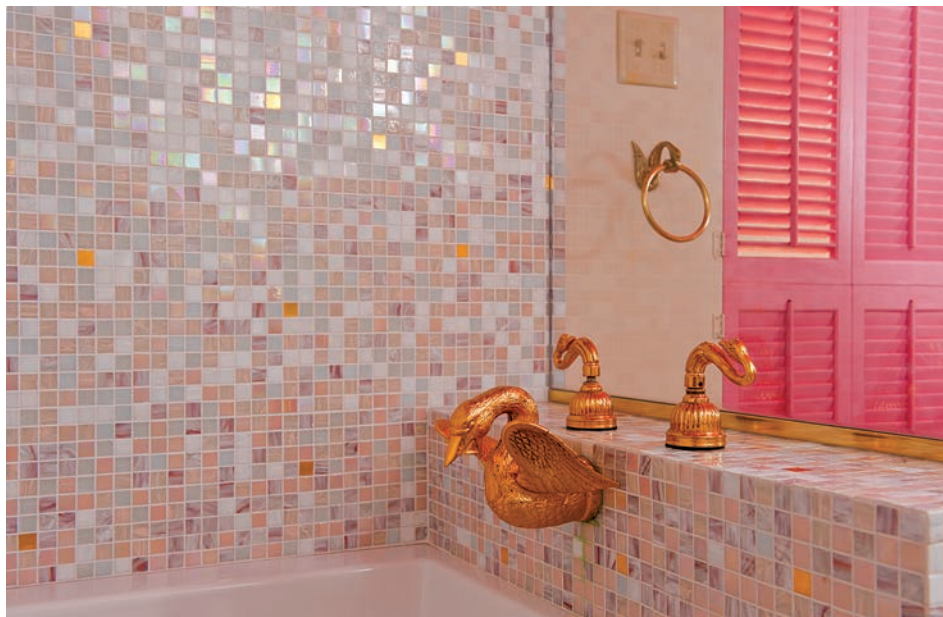
"A design feature of the house is what I call slabs of color: standard hollow-core doors with top transom pieces also made of hollow-core material," says Huggins. "When the doors are closed you have this floor to ceiling block of color. We knew from original drawings what color was painted in a block but not the exact shade. The walls are light and the doors bright, but today's particular colors were driven by our taste."

Martinez, who works for a green real estate developer, loves the bright colors of Mexico. She says their neighbors consider the couple to be quirky, especially since they added the "Howard Johnson-colored stripes" on the garage.

"John is the eBay king and does a lot of research," she explains. "I'd weigh in on, say, three options and had final veto power. I requested a couple of things, like a large fish tank in the living room and speakers in the master bath—and I love the pink and gold Bisazza tile and the gold swan fixtures in our new bathroom. I realized I had to learn more about this era if I am to be the MCM queen people expect me to be."

detail oriented

The aluminum window surrounds were cleaned of 30 years of oxidation, and rooms were repainted and wallpapered. The couple pushed for green features, including renewable cork in the kitchen and entry, and retaining the original pink toilet in the master bath and



In the master bath, the Phylrich swan faucets were replated and augmented with additional sets from the still-in-production line. The company's dolphin faucets were used in the guest bath off the atrium, and the mosaic tile is from Bisazza.

installing dual flush models in others. Barely visible solar panels on the second story provide 50 percent of their electricity. Light fixtures, door-knobs, cabinet and drawer pulls, and the clock and intercom in the kitchen are still in place, just now repaired and cleaned. And they duplicated some original elements, such as walnut cabinetry and the brass pulls from a built-in buffet for use in the upstairs office.

The kitchen is perhaps the most eye-candied room in the house. The Geneva metal cabinet fronts were repainted, carefully matching the existing color. Since the insides were in great condition, and the cabinetry provided plenty of storage, there was no thought of ripping them out. Unoriginal white laminate counters were replaced with 'Bloom Aqua' Ecoresin from 3form, one of the couple's boldest choices. A new Sub-Zero refrigerator and an induction cooktop replaced older models.

Keeping the midcentury flavor while updating the master bath was the most challenging part of the project. The original space was organized into three elements: the sink and mirror, a toilet and shower room, and a raised Roman tub. The dimensions of the room and the cabinetry remain the same, while the tub was replaced with a modern shower/tub combo, complete with gold-colored Phylrich swan fixtures; a second sink was added near the toilet. For this room and the front door modification, they used architect Tomas Hart of The Architecture Studio to finesse the details.

After moving in, 200 guests joined the couple for their home wedding. "What we love about the house is its clean, modern lines, the sense of indoor/outdoor space—it's a really cheerful house," Huggins summarizes. "People think Denver has these terrible winters, but the reality is they're pretty mild and you're often outdoors. Having that connection made this house very attractive to us." ✨



The Geneva kitchen island is original and includes a cutting board, built-in breadbox and slide-out mixer shelf. The cork floor, 3form counters and backsplash, and appliances are all new, while one Gilbert Rohde Z stool is vintage and the other a reissue.

Martinez and Huggins posed for this birth announcement, shot seemingly seconds before their first child arrived.

The pedestal table from Mod Livin' and new Eames chairs with Eiffel-tower bases are lit by a vintage Prescolite lamp; the sliding glass door leads to the outdoor kitchen.



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nick of time

Tucson's Indian Ridge

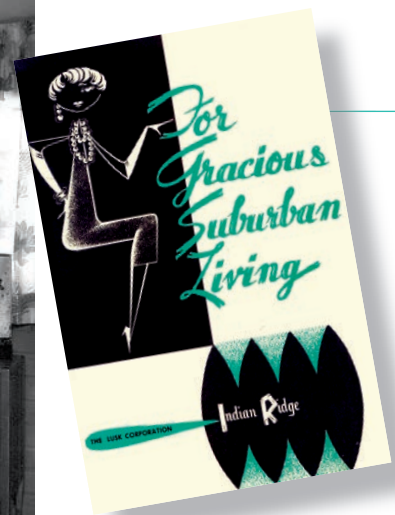


“it is the nature of things that when a man moves up in the world, he and his family reflect his success in many directions. It shows in the car he drives, the circle he frequents, the tailoring of his clothes, and most definitely in the size and site of his home.”

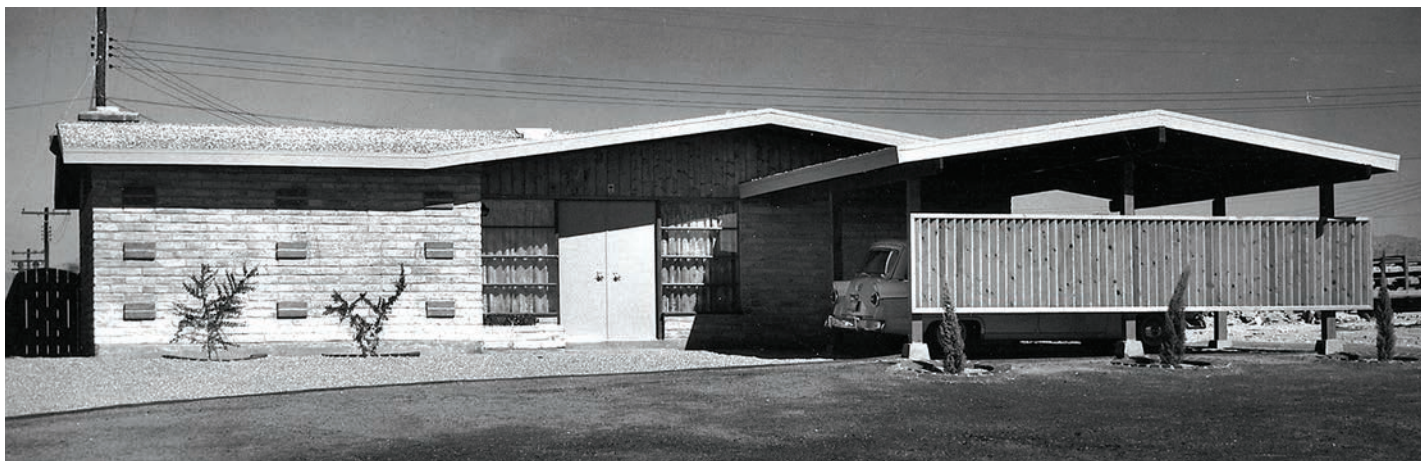
This rather “Mad Men”-esque sentiment was aimed at the country club aspirations of homebuyers in Tucson’s Indian Ridge neighborhood, built between 1955 and 1964. Developed by the Lusk Corporation, once the fifth-

largest builder in the U.S., the ranch homes were sited to minimize sun exposure on primary windows, and utilized burnt adobe construction, slab foundations, carports, sliding glass doors and desert-appropriate landscaping as typical features. With no public transportation to this part of northeast Tucson, owning a car was essential to buying a home there.

Named to the National Register of Historic Places in 2010, 275 of the tract’s 367 homes were considered to be “contributing”—exhibiting historic front facade elements

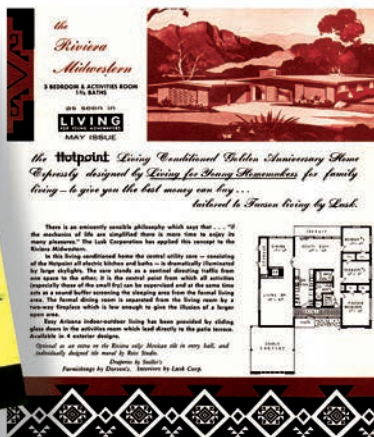
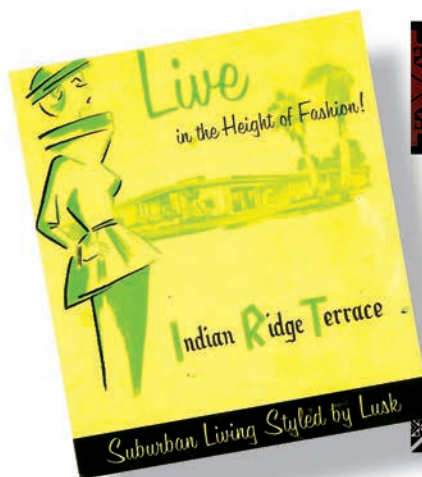


Indian Ridge Press photos from 1955



that add to the cohesion of the neighborhood. "Indian Ridge is a superb example of expressive modernism developed with a thoughtful relationship to the desert environment," says Demion Clinco, president of the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation and the consultant who prepared the nomination. "Four of the models were 'The Monterey,' 'The Riviera Midwestern,' 'The Lanai,' and 'The Idea Home'; each had four or five elevations to choose from. As a marketing strategy, each model featured exclusive options not available on the other models."

Some of the features included Hotpoint appliances, Formica counters and wood cabinets with wrought iron or antiqued copper hardware in the kitchens. Bath fixtures could be ordered in pink, green, brown, gray, blue or white. Interior paint choices numbered 168 hues, while 300 wallpaper options were offered, along with intercoms, wall-to-wall carpeting or "Danish cork" floors. The minimum square footage was 1,350, and a Lusk architect had to approve all fences and colors until 51 percent of the homes were developed in the first tract.



Kitchens came with a Kelvinator dishwasher, but for \$75 buyers could add a garbage disposer, or for \$100 more, a second Tappan oven. The down payment for veterans was a low \$900, while the mortgage (with an impound account) ran \$140 a month or less.

Doug Harbaugh and Doug Striggow own a Lanai model, which they bought from the son of the first owner in 2003. "It was all original inside and out, down to the dishwasher, stove and cooktop," says Striggow, a visual merchandiser for a department store. "All the bathrooms still have their original 1950s fixtures and tile in pink, gray, blue and brown. We updated the appliances and restored the rest of the home, which has cement floors with open beam, tongue-and-groove ceilings. We collected vintage furniture for years, looking forward to finding the perfect

modern home for it."

Every model that Lusk designers Arthur H. Rader and Ray Krueger developed for Indian Ridge could be flipped or angled so that no two look the same, Striggow says. He and Harbaugh wanted to see the neighborhood's uniqueness protected and were instrumental in getting the nomination off the ground.

"We were the leading force in convincing the neighborhood that we should join together and raise the funds needed to hire a consultant who would write our nomina-



Doug Striggow (2)



Above: One of Indian Ridge's Idea Homes.

A Lanai model similar to, yet different than the Striggow/Harbaugh Lanai home, page 30.

tion for the National Register," Striggow says. "The biggest challenge was convincing a number of neighbors that our 1950s homes were worthy of being listed. We compared Indian Ridge to the Palm Springs modern movement, and the tax savings also helped convince them."

Striggow explains that the tax assessment is cut in half for contributing historic properties for 15 years and homeowners can later reapply for another 15 years. "I would let residents know that, if their home was considered a contributing property to the district and they choose to main-

tain the original street view, they could apply for those savings. We asked for a \$125 donation, which would fade in comparison to the potential tax savings.

"For the homes that already had major changes to the street view, we would let them know that, in most cases, historic neighborhoods hold their home values better than non-historic neighborhoods," he continues. "Often, these homeowners already loved the charm of the neighborhood and chose to support the historic project whether they would get the tax savings or not. We told people there was

“Indian Ridge is a superb example of expressive modernism”



Doug Striggow (3)



This page, the Harbaugh/Striggow home, which has a room devoted to Dr. Seuss collectibles dating from the '30s to the 1970s. The pair note that Theodor Geisel was an illustrator for the WWII war effort and did advertising for Ford, Holly Sugar, Standard Oil and others before writing his series of popular children's books. Furnishings include a vintage Womb chair and glass-front lawyer's book-cases rescued from an Army base. "We love the Atomic Age," says Doug Striggow. "In the dining room a vintage carnival rocket ride is hanging from the ceiling, and there's a space ship, robot gum machines and a moon wagon. And I can't forget the Space Cruiser pedal car and our great collection of Franciscan Starburst dinnerware."

even a magazine that was devoted entirely to these kinds of homes, and carried a copy of Atomic Ranch around."

The group that ushered through the two-year nomination process turned to long-time residents for oral histories and vintage Lusk materials, including invaluable information from Rader's daughter, who still lives in the area. A total of \$37,800 was raised from homeowner contributions, selling framed posters of the vintage ephemera, and special events like a guided tour of the prehistoric Indian ruins that give the development its name.

The neighborhood continues traditions like a Fourth of July parade and lining the streets with 8,000 luminaries on Christmas Eve. "Indian Ridge is just an early tract home neighborhood," says Striggow, "but with much bigger lots than today and a lot more style—truly midcentury modern."

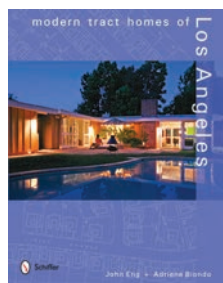
Vintage photography and ephemera courtesy Indian Ridge Historic District. To learn more about Tucson's preservation efforts, including a look at the city's midcentury neon signs, visit tucsonhistoricalpreservationfoundation.org.

atomicbooks



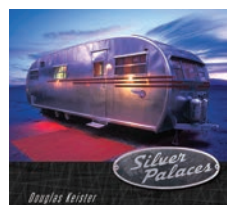
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If you've wondered what you'd see on a driving tour of Palm Springs, this book delivers. Covering both iconic homes and typical modernist tracts in b&w and color photos, Dolly Faibyshev keeps the text super minimal in her picture book of the desert city today. Hardcover, 112 pp., \$30



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Take a tour of Eichler's Balboa Highlands, May's Lakewood Rancho Estates, Palmer & Krisel's Northridge homes, the Ain Mar Vista tract and more through vintage marketing materials and contemporary color interiors and exteriors. John Eng & Adriene Biondo, hardcover, 144 pp., \$40



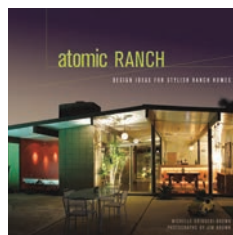
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Little Boxes: The Architecture of a Classic Midcentury Suburb

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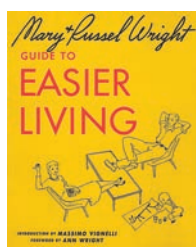
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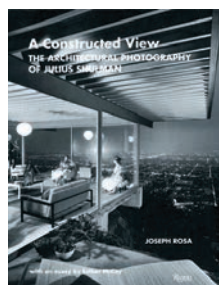
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Saarinen

This small gem introduces you to Eero Saarinen's architecture—the St. Louis arch, TWA terminal, Case Study House #9 and many more. It also looks at his chairs and his collaborations with Charles Eames. A great stocking stuffer! Pierluigi Serrano, color photos, softcover, 96 pp., \$14

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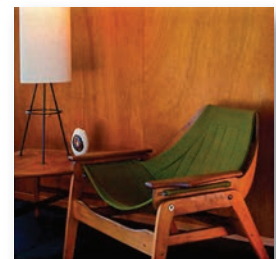
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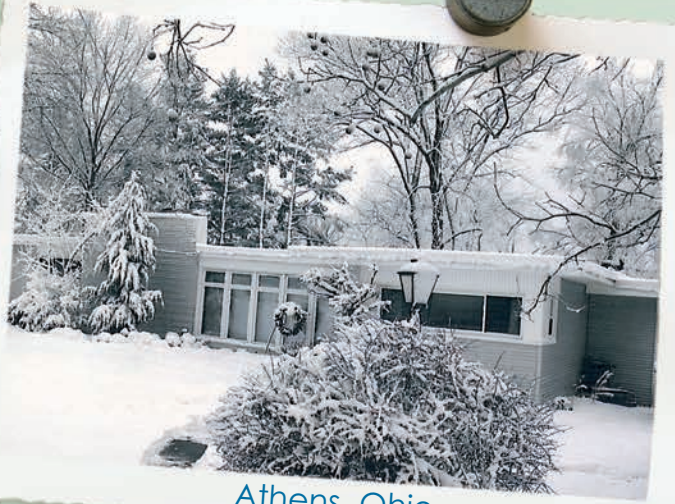
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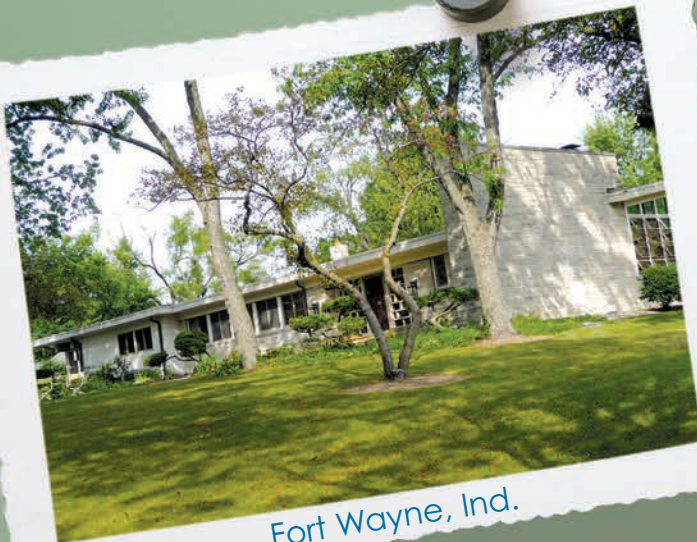
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Portland, Ore.



Athens, Ohio



Fort Wayne, Ind.



home **page**

Portland, Ore.

Our house was built in 1954 and we've been told that there was a builder/architect in Portland who had this signature style—buff brick, dark mortar and a covered outdoor patio that is part of the roofline of the house. My wife and I weren't actively looking, but one day we took a street we normally wouldn't take and there it was. After moving in, we've had total strangers requesting tours and, since we're on a street where people come to walk, we're constantly being asked all sorts of questions and getting lots of nice compliments as well.

Tony & Josette Schuur

Athens, Ohio

We purchased our MCM after almost a year of looking at other homes, as none of them had much of a wow! factor when we walked through. This home converted us and I do not think I can ever live in a traditional house again. The design, with a raised patio embedded in the back of the house, keeps us in constant contact with the nature that surrounds us. We almost about the Wayne National Forest, so a parade of wildlife graces our property. It is very cool!

Cathy Chelak & Kent Ahrens

Fort Wayne, Ind.

Two years ago we became the proud owners of this striking 1949 home designed by Ed Gibson. He was Indiana's first licensed African American architect and was strongly influenced by the work of Paul R. Williams in California. Our home has many original details still in wonderful condition: metal kitchen cabinets, a large wall of Indiana limestone, a vaulted redwood ceiling and a beautiful, symmetrical redwood grill separating the living room from the foyer. The house was originally designed for a family with three young boys, which happens to be our family makeup as well. We can't imagine a more perfect home!

Beth Behrendt & Bill DeSalvo

Show us yours; send in a high-resolution photo or sharp snapshot and a couple of sentences about your cool pad for our next issues. See contacts page 7.



town & country

text Bromley Davenport

photography Jim Brown

“A lot of people who have great midcentury homes don’t know what they have; that was really the case here,” says Daniel Krog about his 1951 ranch in the hills of Studio City, Calif. “[The seller] had very traditional landscaping and finishes—



The curved fireplace wall contrasts nicely with the linear elements of the rest of the house—from the walls of glass to the furniture and bluestone floor. A sofa and coffee table from In House Furniture sit on a Nanimarquina area rug and a custom chair from Landon Cole and built-in seating are both upholstered in gray fabric. Details include midcentury-themed paintings from Danny Heller above the fireplace, a Blomus fire screen and Solartrans Rollease shades from Aero Shade that help control heat gain and loss through the window walls. The house ended where the white posts are before the family room addition in the '60s.



- a entry
- b living room
- c kitchen
- d dining room
- e family room
- f lounge/mini-bar
- g guest bedroom & office
- h guest bathroom
- i master bedroom
- j master bathroom
- k utility
- l center courtyard



Courtesy Daniel Krog



the front door was Victorian—but the bones were here. We knew what it could be when we saw it: the glass walls, the masonry and the curved fireplace were all original. But everything on top of that was kind of like a Rolls Royce covered in pink paint.”

Krog, 41, is a graphic designer, classically trained musician and lyric tenor. He and his spouse, Adam Bonnett, 43, a TV exec with the Disney Channel, owned a house in Palm Springs, and Bonnett’s previous home was built in 1962, so they both knew and loved modernism. The pair fell for the large lot, the valley views and the layout of the house, then set out to free it from the ’80s trappings.

stone age

A new roof and flooring headed the to-do list. “Because the floor plan was so open, it was evident that whoever did the interior had no idea what to do with it. There was 10’ of cheap ceramic tile, then 10’ of carpet, then 10’ more feet of tile; everything was broken up,” Krog comments. All of the hodgepodge flooring was taken up, and the concrete slab was ground to receive 24” honed bluestone tiles in the living, dining and family rooms, as well as in the kitchen. The entry hall and baths got Italian ceramic tile, and both bedrooms were carpeted.

Town & Country Estates, weekend homes for L.A.’s moneyed Hancock Park families, were all single-level ranch homes, once located in the middle of avocado orchards but now just a minute from Ventura Boulevard. The homeowners relandscaped but kept the existing exterior paint scheme.

The floor grid continues out to the new patio, and a chunky pair of steps from the master bedroom and the wide coping around the retrooled pool are other recent improvements. Exterior spaces are furnished with chaise longues and a dining table and six chairs all from Modern Outdoor, and two Hee chairs. Get a tote with this photo at atomic-ranch.com>buy>gear.



*"The flow and the space and the light were here;
we just opened up the windows
to the views."*





Once used as a sewing room by the previous owner, the family room window wall is no longer code, one of the reasons the glass is still original single pane. The media storage unit, the walnut coffee table and the sectional are all from Landon Cole, while the woven armchair is from Loja Designs. An Angela Adams area rug is on the floor, Jonathan Adler vases sit on the table and a wood model of a Pan Am B707 is on the console.

The original L-shaped house had a 1967 family room addition that brought the square footage up to 2,200 and enclosed an outdoor fireplace built of the same buff-colored brick as in the living room. Contractor Angel Ramirez found that the later slab was not attached to the original correctly. "He said we needed to spend \$10,000 to \$15,000 to fuse the joints together, otherwise, no matter what you put on top is always going to crack," Krog recalls. "For a number of reasons, we didn't do that. So the floor would crack, we'd lay it down again, it would crack again.

"The third time, I said enough—we're going to spend the money, I don't care what it costs. That was two weeks before our wedding ceremony here at the house, and it involved pouring new footings and incorporating rebar into both slabs. They got it done in time, and now it's great. It cost \$15,000 but was well worth it."

Krog, who spearheaded the remodel (Bonnett had veto power while Krog had executive privilege, he says), confesses the desire for a matte gray floor was more challenging than anticipated. "You can get stone floors and a sealer at Home Depot if you want a glossy finish. But if you want a really good matte finish, you have to find someone who knows how to work with that type of sealer so it retains its matte look. We had it redone three times."

The couple upgraded the electrical, then room-by-room freshened or replaced every surface. Eighties updates in the two baths were gutted and the kitchen was remodeled—twice.

Behind the refrigerator in the opened-up kitchen is the pantry area, formerly the laundry room. Furniture includes Eames bar stools and a Nelson pear bubble lamp from Modernica, a custom walnut table from the now-closed Silho Furniture and JW01 dining chairs by Jakob Wagner. Danny Heller's 'LAX' hangs near the breakfast bar, while the six framed photos are from the 'Lizzie and Jenny' series from Blurrything Images. A sculptural Balfour Aralia grows atop the built-in planter.

The green volume with the floating shelves camouflages where the back of the curved fireplace intruded into the kitchen space. Swiss Woodworking installed Treefrog wenge crown veneer cabinetry, and the discontinued Caesarstone counters are 'Concrete.' All of the appliances, including the exhaust fan, are GE Monogram or Profile. The travertine tile backsplash is from Walker Zanger.





kitchen conundrum

The existing kitchen had a mix of avocado-colored metal and particleboard laminate cabinetry, original electric appliances and a laundry room shoehorned into one side. The couple worked with designer Annette Eason, who helped finesse some of their ideas and solve specific problems, like the surprise they found behind the old wall oven.

"When we did the kitchen demolition, we discovered the back of the curved fireplace in the living room," Eason says. "A bump-out was built to accommodate that. When these kinds of things happen—and they always do—I like to make them an asset if possible. So instead of an awkward, unintended bump-out, it became a column of color with floating shelves that anchors the corner of the room."

"I wanted to paint it white because I'm a minimalist, but Annette said it had to be a different color so your eye can organize what it's seeing," comments Krog. "I kind of fought her on that, but she was really right. She took the project up to the next level."

For kitchen 2.0, they chose Treefrog lower cabinets—eschewing uppers to maximize the light in the room—and stainless steel appliances, and opened up the wall between the laundry and the kitchen. "I fought for the kitchen backsplash tile to be installed on the vertical, because it's reminiscent of stone you see on midcentury buildings," Krog says. Although the couple loved all their choices, the room still felt small and cut off from the rest of the house.

You can almost hear the conversation where Krog pitched Bonnett the idea of tweaking their new kitchen further by knocking out the wall that separated it from the dining room. But that's what they did.

The wall was load bearing, so their contractor had to install a support beam to carry the



Most of the walls in the house were textured, so the couple had them smoothly refinished. "We wanted all of the interior walls white so our art would pop and the emphasis would be on the exterior views," says Daniel Krog. The bed is from Room & Board. The master bedroom has a sliding glass pocket door that leads to the private back yard.

Just outside the master bath, a framed T-shirt of the Palm Springs Frey House floor plan hangs above a Linea chair. Behind this wall, next to the tub, is where the washer and dryer were tucked behind cabinetry.

Due to the weight of the new Americh tub, the foundation had to be reinforced in the master bath. Designer Annette Eason suggested floating the cabinetry for as spacious a feeling as possible, and Swiss Woodworking installed Treefrog 'White Oak' custom cabinetry.

Kohler sinks are under mounted in Silestone counters, while the glowing wall sconce is an Arne Jacobsen AJ Eklipta; the artwork is by Edward Walton Wilcox.



"When we opened up the wasted space, it was like the heavens were singing!"



weight. They installed a breakfast bar where a portion of the wall had been, and opted to move the laundry hookups into the master bath, which was getting its own makeover at the same time. In the laundry's place is a tall butler's pantry for additional kitchen storage. But achieving version 2.1 was not without its own challenges.

"When the wall was opened, everything on the kitchen side had to be carefully removed and then matched/replaced," remembers Eason. "The ceiling heights of the two rooms were not the same, so we had to come up with a visually clever way to bury the beam and rebuild the entire wall from one side. The Caesarstone color we had originally used [for the counters] had been discontinued at that point; Martin Lozano of Southgate Stone had to find a piece and match the finish. It turned out to be a very complex little project."

updating tradition

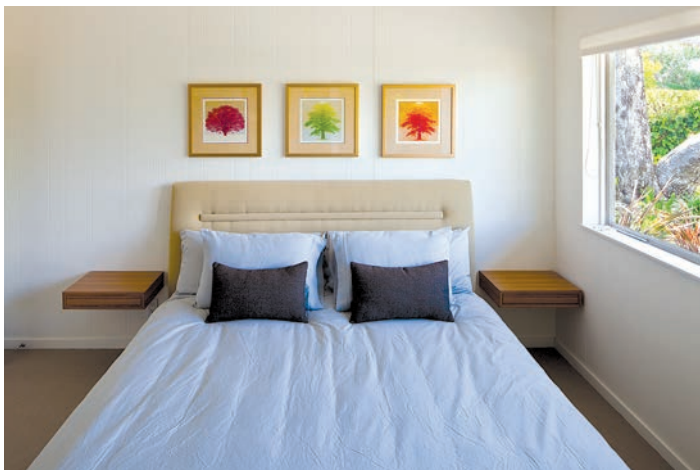
The master bath had a small shower stall with a low ceiling and shower-head. An equally low tile counter held a corner-mounted kitchen sink, and although the room was large, the layout was awkwardly disjointed. They replaced the plumbing, keeping the tub and shower in the same locations, but moved the toilet and added space for two sinks and an additional window. The washer and dryer are now hidden behind cabinet doors. "There was lots of wasted space," Krog says. "When we opened it up, it was like the heavens were singing!"

Another puzzle was the fireplace and barbeque in the family room. "This was a section of the house we didn't quite know what to do with. The chimney had been ruined in an earthquake, and to fix it we would have had to rebuild that side of the house; we knew we didn't want to do that," he

The end of the guest bedroom has been made into a home office with an Eames desk and Aluminum Group chair, both from Herman Miller. The giclee prints on canvas are by Washington, D.C. artist Joyce Bonnett, Adam's mother.

Above the custom bed from In House Design in the guest room are woodblocks by Hajime Namiki.

When they bought the house, the guest bath had a sunken tub, brass and gold fixtures, and a black toilet and sink. Today there is a mix of tile from Walker Zanger and Daltile, a Kohler sink, Toto toilet and Caesarstone 'Rosemary' counters. The modular cabinetry is from The Container Store, and a painting by Danny Heller hangs over the simple towel bar.



says. "Instead, we opted for a bookshelf where the fireplace was, and where the indoor barbeque was, we had Nick Ganzoni, our cabinetmaker, build a walnut mini bar that pulls out. Many people think these are original to the house, which makes us happy."

Krog says the episodic remodel really came together when they tackled the last big project: the back yard. A pink concrete patio, a pool house that was sliding down the hill and a view-blocking fence weren't doing it for them. Working with landscape designer Judy Marchyn, a retaining wall added a few more feet of level yard, and the pool got new steps and coping. "Judy nailed the types of plants we wanted and how to lay them out; she really did a great job with that," Krog says. But his own favorite feature is the cement patio design he suggested, with scoring that mimics the bluestone pavers inside.

"The family room juts off at an odd angle. I felt that if you have a strange angle, don't try to hide it—make it as pronounced as possible so that it looks intentional," he says. "We mirrored the 90-degree angle of the living room wing to the master bedroom. It extends the house and complements the kidney-shaped pool."

Two years and thousands of dollars later, Bonnett and Krog are still besotted with their home. "Doing the renovation room by room as you live in the space taught us how we use the house and informed our decisions," Krog says. "It's not like we walked into a classic midcentury home and started ripping it down. We felt it was more stripping away the excess to let the real house live again." ✨

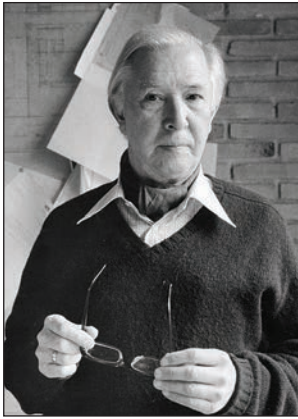


Resources page 77

modern masters

for your ranch:

Hans Wegner



text J M Cava

photography courtesy Jens Mourits Sørensen & Mikkel Adsbøl



Courtesy DanishDesignStore.com



In 1960, when John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon sat down in front of a television camera to debate communism, Cuba and the Cold War, how many of the 70 million viewers cared about the chairs the adversaries sat in? A lot more than you'd think. Specially requested by JFK as a comfortable support for his notorious bad back, the unusual design—by Hans Wegner, a woodworker little known outside his native Denmark—immediately caught the attention of designers around the country, gaining such rapid appeal that it became known simply as “The Chair,” a label it retains to this day.

Designed in 1949 and still manufactured in Denmark by PP Møbler (originally by Johannes Hansen) The Chair, or 501 as Wegner called it (he gave his chairs only numbers, never names), remains an unrivalled icon of the Danish Modern design movement and was referred to by *Interiors* magazine as the world's most beautiful chair. Paola Antonelli, a former curator of architecture and design at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, paid her own tribute to The Chair in Wegner's 2007 obituary: “First and foremost, it's comfortable, and saying that it's comfortable before saying it's beautiful is really high praise, because the truth is that it's incredibly elegant.” It is a piece of furniture at once ancient and modern, a kind of archetypal chair with only the essentials: a vertical semi-circle of wood sitting on four tapered legs with a cane or leather seat between them. The result is purely modern in its elegance, paired with economy of form.

The son of a shoemaker, Wegner was born in a small

town in Denmark in 1914, where he later took up wood-working and cabinetry as a boy. After studying design in Copenhagen, he created furniture for Arne Jacobsen's modernist town hall in Aarhus during the late 1930s, and in 1943 opened his own studio in the same city. By the 1950s Wegner—along with Jacobsen, Bruno Mathsson of Sweden, Borge Mogensen and Finn Juhl—had become synonymous with the term “Danish Modern,” exporting his inimitable style of highly crafted, modern reinterpretations of historic furniture around the world. In the early days, it was a tightly knit group that “worked in a spirit of fun,” recalled Wegner in Jens Bernsen's *Hans J. Wegner on Design*. “None of us dreamed that we might one day make a living from the furniture we designed.”

Wegner's was an intuitive approach, as he recalled the design of the 501: “I was working on the full-scale model and was unhappy about the arm. Its form didn't seem right to me. I took a walk, thought it over, and sawed off the offending portion. I glued on a new piece and gave it the shape it has today.”

Known for his belief that a chair needed to be

Opposite: The Chinese chair is Wegner's update of a classic Asian design, while the Wishbone or Y Chair streamlines the concept even further. The Wishbone is available in several woods and 10 lacquered hues.

One of Wegner's best-known chairs, the Papa Bear or Teddy Bear—a name coined by a design critic—is available in leather and fabric, with a variety of wooden “paw” materials.



Courtesy fredericia.com



Clockwise, from upper left:

Wegner's Valet Chair is designed to hold a suit jacket on its sculptural hanger-like back, and a folded pair of pants on the open seat, while a triangular box corals your change and smart phone.

The J16 Rocker would be at home in most households, and has been in continuous production since its introduction by FDB.

Put back in production in 2002 by PP Møbler, the Flag Halyard Chair combines a stainless steel frame with a single length of natural flax cording and a sheepskin throw, topped by a headrest pillow; it's tough to think of doing anything beyond napping in its embrace. The accompanying PP586 fruit bowl was designed in 1956 for Johannes Hansen's Workshop.

The Peacock chair, designed in 1947, shares many elements of a Windsor chair, yet is distinctly modern in its execution.

Wegner designed the PP589 Bar Bench for the entrance of his own home in 1953.



structurally sound enough to last at least 50 years, Wegner personally supervised all production, even at the height of his fame when three separate Danish companies shared production of the various designs. He refused many offers to associate with larger American companies, saying that he preferred working with people he was familiar with. His vision, though modern, was underscored by a firm belief in the timeless skills of craft. For example, he would not use steam-bent wood (which is how most of Alvar Aalto's curved pieces are made); he considered it not exact enough and he had PP Møbler fabricate his Captain's chair from a lamination of 15 separate pieces of sliced ash.

Wegner's particular design skill was in reinterpreting historic furniture designs—refining, modernizing and simplifying their style while increasing comfort and affordability. His largest selling chair remains the Wishbone or Y Chair (CH 24) designed in 1950, and now available in several materials and colors. It is an evolution of an earlier design, the Chinese Chair from 1944, which in turn was inspired by an illustration of a genuine Chinese chair in a book that Wegner stumbled upon. He relaxed the stiff, formal rectangularity of the original, refining and purifying it down to its barest essentials. It was this alchemy that turned the quiet and mild-mannered Danish carpenter into an international modernist celebrity.

Though he is largely known through his extraordinary chairs, Wegner designed other pieces of furniture with the same sensibility: tables of all types and sizes, sideboards and occasional furniture, including a beautiful sewing cart and even some classic modern lamps for the Louis Poulsen company. Because of their historic precedents, these pieces fit in comfortably with almost any decorating sensi-

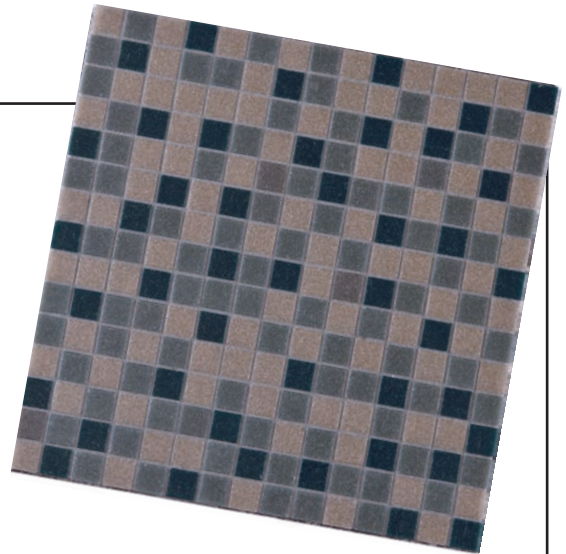
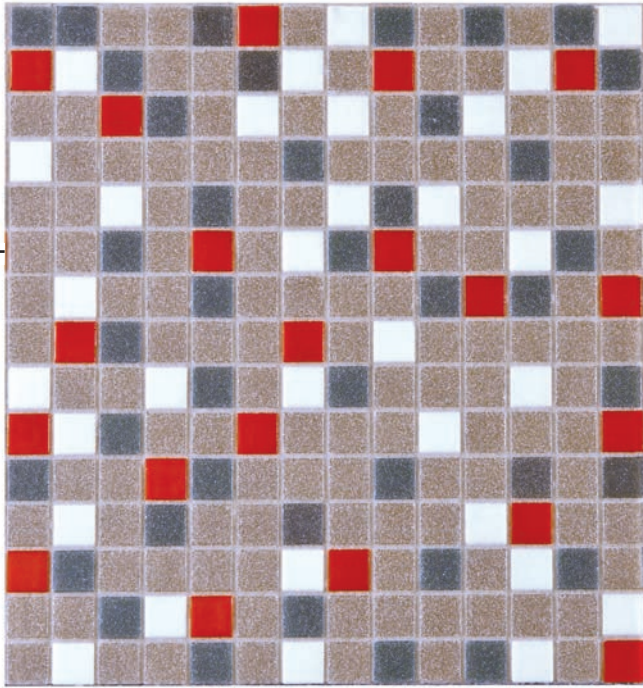
The 501 Chair is simple and timeless, a design that Wegner referred to as "The Round One." "They could have made this hundreds of years ago—nothing new here," was his modest assessment of the famous design. Dating from 1949, the next year an upholstered seat variation, numbered PP503, was introduced; today both are available in oak, ash or cherry.

bility, from the most minimalist modern room of steel and glass to spaces of eclectic clutter with only a hint of modernity about them. For example, the PP550 Peacock Chair is derived from the classic 18th-century English Windsor chair and would be perfectly at home in my grandmother's living room. Or the J16 Rocking Chair (1944), modeled on the enduring dignity of Shaker furniture, which is still a favorite in the nursery (I bought one when my child was born).

Many of Wegner's pieces remain in production, but over time prices have edged up beyond the budget of most of us middle-class modernists. Vintage items are a cheaper way to go unless it's a rare item, in which case be prepared to battle against retailers and collectors with serious money. Most expensive are typically the early pieces from Johannes Hansen; they're scarce and Hansen was a true cabinet-maker, not a production shop, so these are considered the quintessential Wegner pieces. Nearly all should be signed and those by PP Møbler, Carl Hansen, Ry Møbler and Andreas Tuck (mostly tables) will cost proportionately less, yet are exquisite examples of one of the great masters of modernism. But it's not enough to simply own these chairs—they need to be used, for as Wegner liked to say, "A chair is only finished when someone sits in it." ✻

JM Cava is an architect in Portland, where he teaches, writes and designs. Photography courtesy PP Møbler, pp.dk

cool|stuff



When modwalls invited us to design a tile mix or two in their Brio® glass mosaic line, we channeled the '60s to create Atomic Ranch's 'Midcentury Palette' and 'Blue Riff.' Brio® 3/4" tile is made of vitreous glass, which has a surface texture that makes it suitable for floors and walls, indoors and out. Shown here with StarGlass grout in aventurine and moon-stone tints, the premixed grout is mold and mildew resistant and has a high recycled-glass-dust content. Available on 1.15-square-foot mesh sheets, each is less than \$10 a pop. Be the first to make your home truly an Atomic Ranch; visit modwalls.com.





The new year is coming, which means the 2012 AR calendar is available for your holiday gift-giving and office cubicle adornment. Featuring upcoming homes and unpublished views of interiors and exteriors of all types of ranches (and a few old favorites), order yours today at **atomic-ranch.com > buy > gear**.

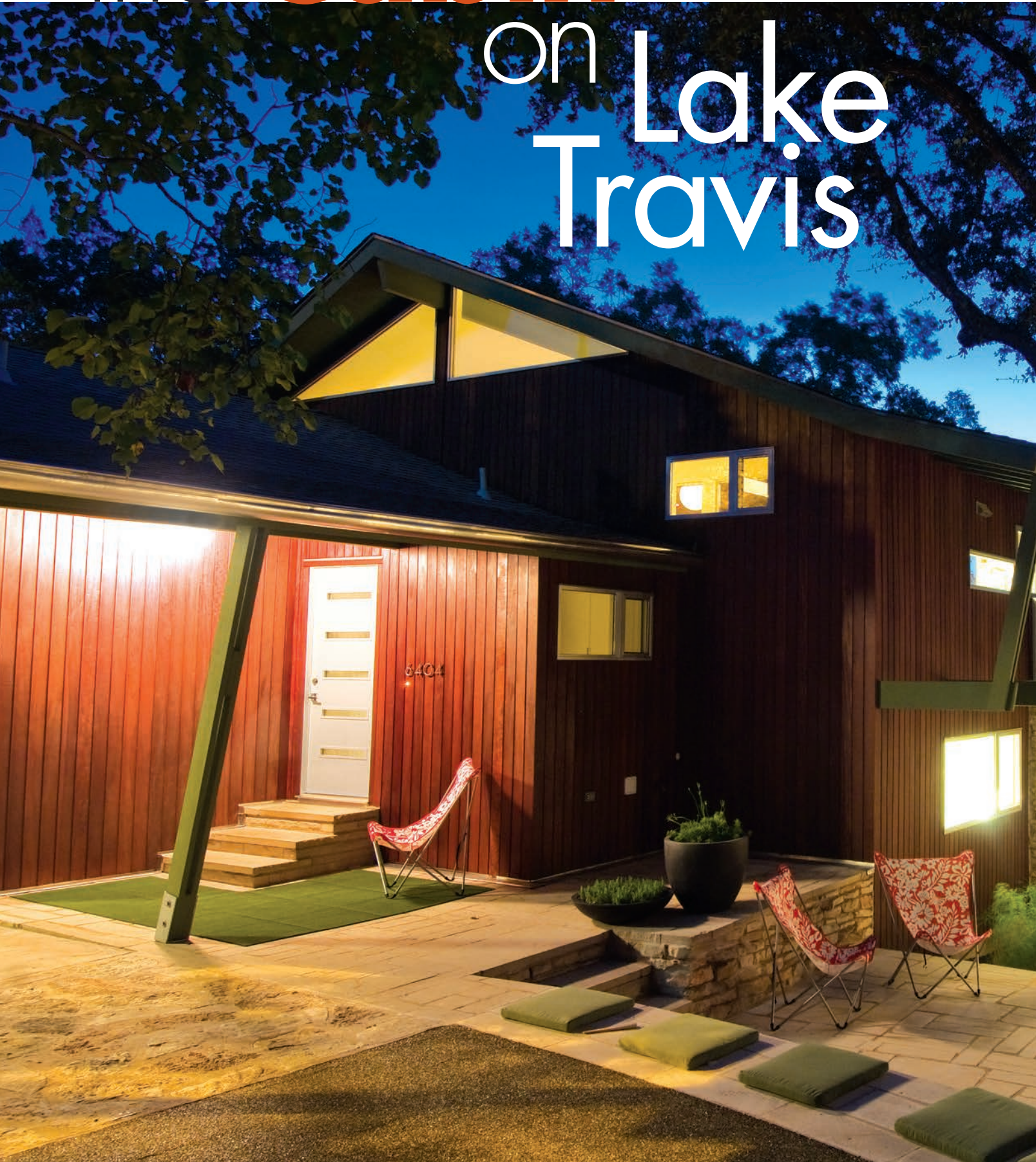


Post-and-beam modernist homes are beautiful, but they present challenges when you want to lower your energy bills with insulation. No attic means 'outsulating' with a complex materials sandwich or a foam roof. But what if there was an invisible nanotechnology shield that could be applied in a weekend or two?

Nansulate is a low-VOC, water-based coating system that is a poor thermal conductor, meaning it's crummy at transferring hot air to the cool outside environment—which is good. Translucent, with a matte finish, it can be painted over or coat a prepainted surface—ceilings, walls, even exteriors. Read up on its potential at **nansulate.com**.

the **Cabin**

on Lake
Travis





text Karen Lantz

photography Hester + Hardaway

it was January 2008, and my husband and I were driving past an abandoned-looking property near Lake Travis, north of Austin. We love this lakeside town and have been going to his family's cabin there for more than 20 years.

Andy could not curb my enthusiasm as we noticed a For Sale sign in front of a 1963 retro modern beauty in the rough, located along a wooded and sloping site. I began working to convince him this place could be an investment we would be able to enjoy. "You can't have a dinner party or watch the sunset in your 401(k)," I told him.



Before





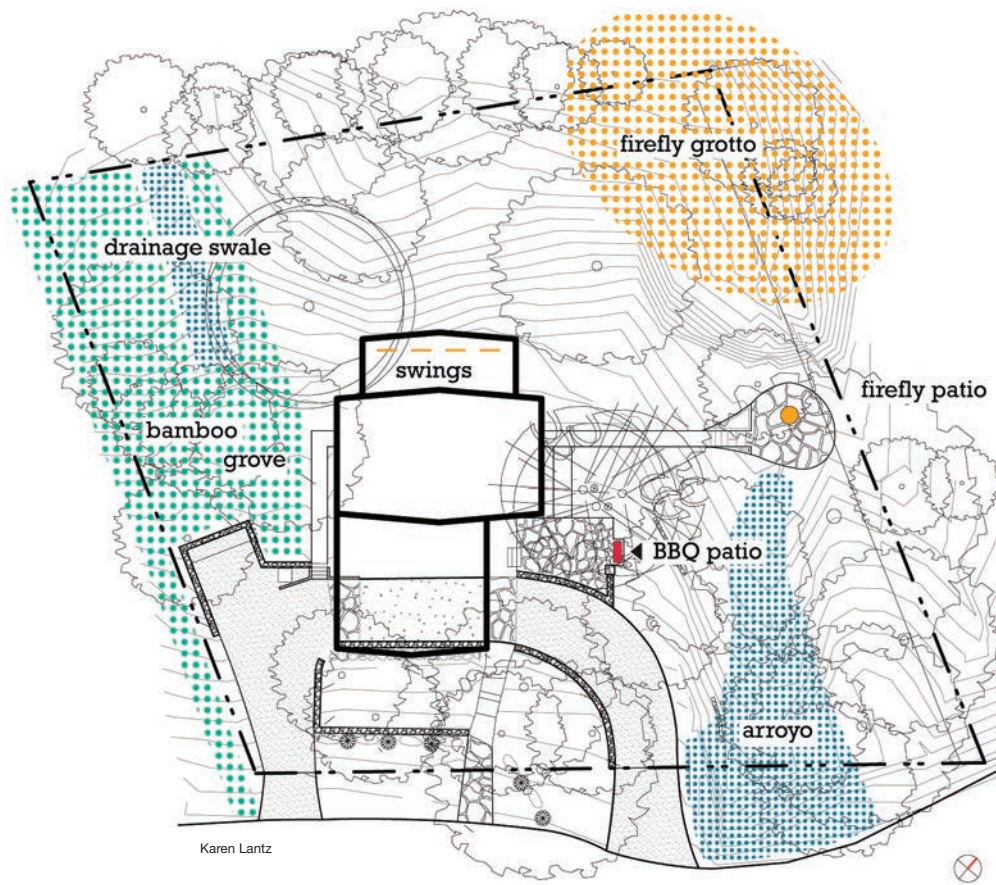
After seeing the inside, I assured him the only improvements would be paint and carpet; how great would it be to have our own little cabin? We've always taken friends up to the lake for boat rides, hikes in the hills and gourmet dinners with great wine, and there's never been enough room at the original one-bedroom, one-bath family cabin. Each group curiously asks, "Who will sleep on the futon, who gets the air mattress, who stays in the hot loft and what lucky person gets the coveted bedroom with a door?"

This new cabin was a luxurious 1,300 square feet, with three bedrooms and two bathrooms—perfect for our needs. Neglected, the structure could have easily been destined for a landfill due, as it turned out, to major termite damage. In a state of disrepair from deferred maintenance and deficient detailing, it was instead repurposed as a shared retreat for a close-knit group of friends.

Of course our plans grew significantly. I began contracting out the renovation efforts in March 2008 with much still to discover. The biggest piece of the renovation puzzle came from a good friend who knows structure: we needed bigger roof beams. The original, main structure of the house

Before







Before

was undersized and failing, made worse by the termite situation.

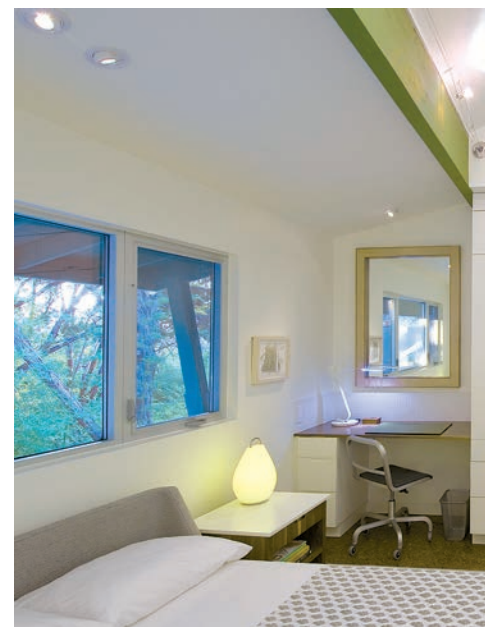
Originally, there were three solid beams in the main living room, but in other areas, box beams had been used. These were made up of two 2" x 12" pieces of lumber trimmed in 1" material to make it look like a beam, but all quite rotten from poor detailing at the exterior junctions.

I like to call this the "point of opportunity" in the project, while Andy might say this was our "point of no return." Replacing all of the beams allowed me to strip down and express the structure to its basic form, removing the attic space and opening previously hidden volumes of the house. Additionally, I was able to extend the roof plane to provide more shade and cover to the west-facing sunset lake view.

The day the beams were installed was pretty exciting. The house rocked and swayed like nothing I've ever seen or felt before on a construction site. It took the entire team of framers to hoist the nine new beams into place. The longest, at 32' in length, is now fully expressed from the inside to the outside of the house.

We restored the original floor plan by removing a poorly constructed storage shed near the front door, and opened the laundry room to the interior, with access through a pocket door. We relocated the mechanical equipment from the attic to the naturally cooled basement, and now full-height windows have improved the quality of light and strengthened the connection to the treetops and lake. And we solved problematic details like wood that touched the ground, allowing it to rot, by substituting steel, ensuring much-increased structural longevity.

Outside, we reintroduced native plantings and restored retaining walls and



patios with native limestone harvested from the property. Impermeable asphalt was replaced with a porous recycled glass composite that filters runoff before it absorbs into the water table. The addition of a generous steel framed deck doubled the living space, allowing for large gatherings.

'The Hive' is a split-level plan with three 'suites' that each has a connection to its own distinct outdoor room while sharing communal living spaces. A bamboo grove screens the house from neighboring property, a grotto attracts summer fireflies and a rock garden works as a natural drainage swale. By differentiating the sleeping quarters, our friends have the option to reserve rooms and appreciate the seasonal variety of each space.

There were hurdles to completing the project, such as building in a new city and finding good trade contacts, as well as working and living away from home. In my view, the house was renovated to maximize an underlying potential that never transpired in the first place. I took cues from the original design intent to elevate it while keeping true to the period and implementing sustainable strategies.

Last, but not least, we installed four bright-yellow playground swings at the outermost edge of the steel deck addition. As you fly out over the sloping hill, it's like a thrill ride—a little scary! We finished the project just in time to celebrate with 4th of July fireworks over the new deck. It was wonderful to enjoy the cabin with friends after many months of hard work.

The Hive's motto in our guest book reads, "The hive that stays together, works together, plays together. Be a part of our hive. Welcome." 🌿

The three overnight suites—'Stone,' 'Bamboo' and 'Grotto,' left to right—have a similar aesthetic, but each has unique furnishes and a direct connection to different parts of the property.



Karen Lantz is a Houston-based architect at Enter Architecture and a founding partner of Houston Mod; visit her blog, lantzfullcircle.com, for more photos of the cabin, and check out Texas preservation efforts at houstonmod.org. See her previous home in Atomic Ranch: Design Ideas for Stylish Ranch Homes (page 60) and links to green resources and furnishings on page 77.



Because It Matters

We used sustainable, green strategies to make a better building:

1. FilterPave pavement reduces storm-water runoff, uses a high percentage of recycled materials and contributes to USGBC LEED calculations.

2. Timberline Cool roof shingles manufactured by Elk Prestique use highly reflective granules that bounce back the sun's rays and more effectively release absorbed heat. They are rated by the Cool Roof Rating Council (CRRC) and meet initial Energy Star performance levels.

3. Massaranduba hardwood siding and decking is resistant to insect attack and decay. One of the densest woods on the planet, it is very durable and long lasting, plus wood is biodegradable and of all the different types of building materials, the easiest to recycle.

4. We recycled existing **Texas limestone** to make the retaining walls and patios; about 80% of the stone used was already on site.

5. Icynene insulation delivers high-performance solutions for efficient building envelopes, thermal comfort and a healthy living environment—all integral components of green building and design.

6. Aluminum Ram Windows with insulated, low-e glass and operable units allow for passive cooling.

7. Aluminum gutters and rain chains are 100% recycled,

and the material is long lasting and does not require maintenance.

8. An **energy-efficient mechanical system** with 14.00 SEER heat pump relocated to a naturally cooled space year-round allows the unit to work easier.

9. Quartz counters by CaesarStone are nontoxic, totally inert via a singular and controlled manufacturing process, nonporous to prevent surface mold and microbes, and low maintenance to decrease detergent usage.

10. Cork flooring by Gerbert Limited is a natural, renewable product. Cork is stylish, resilient and easy care, as well as antistatic and scuff- and slip-resistant.

11. Modular carpet by Interface FLOR is climate neutral; the company invests in carbon offsets and renewable energy such as clean wind farms and landfill methane gas to help power their Georgia manufacturing facility.

12. Window shades by The Shade Store are made from PVC-free, lead-free, 100% recyclable material that blocks 95% of UV rays—ideal for conserving energy, harnessing natural light and maintaining interior comfort levels.

13. Native landscaping that requires little water and is naturally suited for the area is augmented with solar-powered landscape light fixtures.

14. Most important: **we recycled the house**, keeping the bones and preventing additional land disturbance; it's modern preservation.

ranchdressing

House parts ...
midcentury collectibles ...
the inside scoop on
what's what
and where to get it

q: A friend bought this chair for me a couple of years ago at a garage sale for \$25. It's in great shape. I suspect it has been recovered at some point (the fabric is a kind of rough velour), but the molded foam cushion is original (it's starting to powder, although still in good shape). No labels/maker's marks or anything else I can find. Do



you think this is just another generic, nicely designed, midcentury teak chair, or ...?

Eric Kowalski, Vancouver, BC

a: We ran this by vintage dealer Shauntelle LeBlanc, of Ethel-20th Century Living in Toronto: "My first thought was correct—this is an Adrian Pearsall lounge chair. It's those organic legs and swept back arms [that give it away]! Here's a link to one that was reupholstered, but most I found online are in this same green, so it's likely that the wool fabric is original.

http://vandm.com/Adrian_Pearsall_Walnut_Lounge_Chair

"From what I can find out, it was designed in 1965 and manufactured by Craft Associates. It's walnut, although sometimes even I can mistake walnut for teak. Depending on the condition of the upholstery and wood, I would sell a chair like this in my store for between \$500 and \$800."

Adrian Pearsall's family maintains a website (www.adrianpearsall.com) that includes images of the family home and a catalog of his furniture designs. The original catalog page shows the 2249-C chair wearing a wild floral and confirms that the frame is solid walnut. Son Jim Pearsall added these details: "The chair, like all of my father's furniture, was available in a variety of coverings as well as the customer's own material. The fabric in this picture is one Craft supplied. If the chair or any other item was popular, it would be photographed several times in different covers."

While laying out this issue, we heard from Adrian's family that he had died in early September at the age of 85. He and his wife, Dorie, first sold his furniture off the back of a truck before founding Craft Associates and Comfort Designs in the '50s and '60s. His most celebrated pieces include the gondola sofas, freeform tables and the still-popular beanbag chair. The family home that he designed was shown in AR No. 28.

q: I recently was in a local thrift store and found this elongated melamine bowl. The bottom stamp was 'Boontonware,' and I have other plastic dishes that are stamped 'Boontonware Belle.' The design intrigued me, and I discovered that Boonton Belle (1953) was designed by Belle Kogan (1902–2000) for Boonton Molding Company of New Jersey.

Kogan is regarded as one of the first prominent female industrial designers in the United States. She designed for Boonton between 1949 and 1962, and was considered one of the most experienced designers

in the plastics field. She also worked for Red Wing Pottery, Federal Glass Co. and Reed and Barton. Why had I never heard of her?

Dennis Dell



a: Marci Holcomb, who wrote a dishware article for us in No. 8, Winter 2005, sheds some light on collecting the plastic dishware: "We have a bunch of Boonton Melmac in our collection but I didn't know about the connection to Belle Kogan. Author Michael Pratt has been compiling research on her and posted it on his Modish website: modish.net/belle-kogan-industrial-designer-fact-sheet-work-progress. She had a pretty fascinating career!"

"The pastel color square-in-circle plates and winged bowls are coveted by collectors who appreciate the quality of early 1950s melamine. The sturdy design and turned edges make Boonton more durable than the late-'50s/early-'60s Melmac. Prices on eBay and Etsy remain reasonable, but we have noticed Melmac becoming scarce in the thrifts. We are glad we set aside some for our own personal collection!"

See Holcomb's Sputnik Housewares at etsy.com/shop/sputnikmoss) and Deco to Disco in Portland, Ore.

q: I found this great table at a Goodwill with my mom for \$20. It grew on me, so later I went back to pick



it up. It has these great brass fittings on the legs and it's stamped underneath the table. It's in bad need of resurfacing, which I'm working on now, but if you could find out more about it, that would be great.

Jonathan Booth

a: Your table gives you a lot to go on: the manufacturer is stamped right on the underside. The Lane Furniture company of Altavista, Va., began in 1912, and is best known for their cedar chests. Still in business today, though now a part of a conglomerate, their site says they began producing occasional tables in 1951.

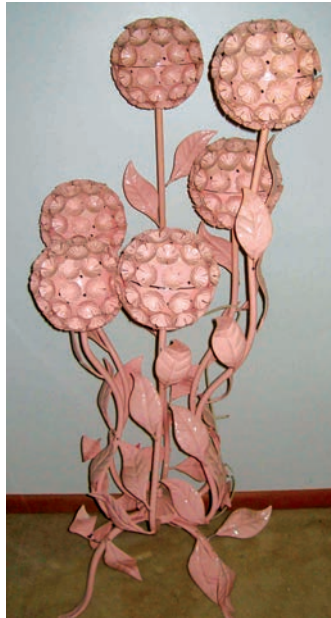
If you search online, you'll find links to various Lane coffee tables and side tables, some with inlaid dovetails in contrasting wood, or step tiers. If the tips offered on the Lane site for dating their cedar chests hold true for your table, reading backwards, it was produced 10/22/55. Pairs are more desirable than singles, and prices run in the low \$100s to maybe \$300, depending upon condition and design. With a nicely restored finish, your \$20 table would look great with a vintage lamp and a bowl of bridge mix on her.

q: My family has owned this lamp for 40 years. Legend has it my mother found it at a furniture warehouse. It had been commissioned for the wife of a local used-car salesman, but he laid eyes on it and refused

more ranchdressing

delivery. Somehow, I've managed to grow fond of it. I've never seen anything else even remotely like it and my feeling is that if you have something unique, hang on to it. However, I would like to know more about it. Any clues?

Brent Richardson



a: *Bo Sullivan of Arcalus Period Design in Portland, Ore., agrees that he, too, hasn't seen anything quite like this. "Wow; that's something! I wish I could shed professional light on this question, but it is outside my area of experience. My instincts say family legends usually have some grain of truth amidst a saltshaker of 'good story.'*

"I will say that this style of stamped steel floral fixtures was certainly a trend in its day (likely late 1960s), so I expect all the components used here would have been off-the-shelf. It is the construction that would place it in the one-of-a-kind category. Putting it to the hive-mind of your readers will probably bring some useful feedback."

q: I live in Winnipeg in a midcentury modern bungalow built in 1956. While driving through my 1950s neighborhood, I came across six fiberglass chairs, what I thought were Eero Saarinen tulip chairs, tossed curbside!

The chairs were filthy to say the least; the fiberglass was absolutely caked in nasty layers of dirt, rust, cobwebs, leaves, grime and a few dead bugs. The X-cross aluminum bases were also in rough shape, equally grimy, with raised and peeling paint.

Turns out the chairs weren't Saarinen—the base was my first clue. The second was the raised stamped label

on the bottom of all the chair seats saying 'Burke Inc, Dallas Texas' and a serial number. After doing some research on the web, I discovered these were styled after the Saarinen chair, manufactured in the late-'50s/early-'60s, and were the type of chair used on the set of 'Star Trek.' If they were good enough for Captain Kirk's crew they were good enough for me!

The fiberglass has cleaned up fairly well, but the propeller bases need additional TLC. Also, I think the chairs should swivel, and they don't, probably because of all the rust damage. I'm not sure what the best approach would be to complete their restoration.

Rowan Smith-McCandless



a: Burke tables and chairs were featured several times in our early issues, and the Denver house on page 20 has a set on its front patio. Taking the bases to an auto paint shop might be the way to go, a technique readers have used on rusty metal kitchen cabinets. But we're not sure if the swivel mechanism is salvageable if it's rusted as you guess.

Lloyd Fadem of Retro Redo, a vintage furniture renovator, had some additional pro advice: "There was no swivel on early Burke chairs, and when possible, it's always best to powder coat [as opposed to spray paint]. Burke chairs do not bring the dollars of Knoll, but everyone loves the table because it is such a close match to the Knoll table. Lots of people have a marble top cut, and they look great after powder coating."

q: I have five Goodform aluminum chairs that I purchased for \$2 each when one of the companies I worked for went under. They had been in the smoking room and had been bought from a used office furniture supply. What can you tell me about them? They could use some cleaning and a few of the feet need replacing. How do I clean them and where might I get feet?

Suzanne Braun

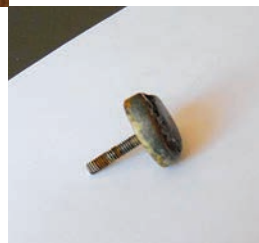


a: Steve Mogol of Past Present Future in Minneapolis has the goods: "The world's first all-aluminum office chair was designed by ALCOA in 1924. The General Fireproofing Co. began manufacturing their



own aluminum chairs in 1924, which were copies of the wood office chairs popular at the time, and were even painted with wood grain finishes. The GF "Goodform" seating line began in August 1932 with the introduction of the Model #2123; ten more models were introduced in 1935. Your chairs are Goodform model #4295 with a full aluminum seat pan; the Emeco version started in 1944.

"Cleaning takes a good quality, mild cleaning solution such as Formula 409, a mild dish soap or car wash liquid. Use a washcloth, mild cleaning pad, soft bristle brush and toothbrush, and hot water. To finish, apply an automobile polish, let it dry and wipe off with a soft cotton towel. If the chair was clear coated at the factory, the finish has most likely turned yellow with age. If that has happened, the chair can still be restored to its original beauty, but this is a multi-step process that takes a professional to do it properly. The feet you refer to are chair glides, and some types are no longer available. Past Present Future (ppf1.com) has glides in inventory for most chairs."



Need a renovation resource or wondering if that flea market find is anything? Send your questions and photos to editor@atomic-ranch.com and we'll run them past our experts.

atomic events

Through January 15 New York City
February 26–May 20 Rochester, N.Y.

Crafting Modernism: Mid-Century Art & Design 1945–1969

A survey of the studio craft movement that followed World War II includes works by Harry Bertoia, Anni Albers, Isamu Noguchi, Wendell Castle, Peter Voulkos, Harvey Littleton and Margaret Tafoya. mag.rochester.edu

Through January 16 Los Angeles

Eames Designs: The Guest-Host Relationship

Part of Pacific Standard Time, a six-month collaboration of L.A.-area cultural institutions, this exhibition at the A + D Architecture and Design Museum explores the couple's vintage furnishings and films through the prism of a designer anticipating his or her guests' needs; in this case, the guests are us. pacificstandardtime.org



The Huntington Library

Through January 30 San Marino, Calif.

The House That Sam Built

Subtitled "Sam Maloof and Art in the Pomona Valley, 1945–1985," this exhibition at The Huntington Library brings together 30 pieces of Maloof's studio furniture with works from friends and colleagues in the Southern California postwar art world. Painters Millard Sheets and Phil Dike, and

ceramists Otto and Gertrude Natzler are represented, along with artists working in other media.

Huntington.org for more info.

Through February 12 Bellevue, Wash.

George Nelson: Architect, Writer, Designer, Teacher

The Bellevue Arts Museum hosts this traveling exhibi-

tion from the Vitra Design Museum in Germany. Learn more about the midcentury designer through 120 objects—benches, chairs, clocks, desks, lamps and more—as well as drawings, photographs, films and architectural models. bellevuearts.org.



Lydia Kremer

February 16–26 Palm Springs
Modernism Week

In addition to the Palm Springs Modernism Show & Sale at the city's Convention Center February 18–20, this 11-day event features tours of midcentury homes and neighborhoods, lectures, parties and special exhibitions. The 2012 lineup includes numerous tours—the former Sinatra house; Sunnyland, the Annenberg family's A. Quincy Jones–designed home; the Loewy House; the Frey House II; interior- and garden-oriented tours; the Elrod House; the El Rancho Vista Estates tract (see No. 30, Summer 2011); and architectural highlights of the city. Lecture topics range from California Design 1930–1965; Paul R. Williams; Alexander Girard; Albert Frey; the architecture of Columbus, Ind., and more. Not enough? How about vintage Avantis and other cars, along with a travel trailer display and a unique industrial design fashion show? More details at modernismweek.com.

February 18 Decatur, Ga.
Decatur Old House Fair

Workshops and lectures on topics of interest to owners of older homes, including window restoration, historic

paint colors and kitchen and bath solutions, along with retailers specializing in home improvement and historic preservation. At the Decatur Courtyard Conference Center; decaturoidhousefair.com.

Through February 20 **San Francisco**
Less and More: The Design Ethos of Dieter Rams



San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

This San Francisco Museum of Modern Art exhibition includes more than 200 items by Dieter Rams, the influential German industrial designer for Braun and Vitsoe. sfmoma.org

February 25–26 **Cincinnati**
20th Century Cincinnati

Queen City Shows returns to the Sharonville Convention Center with more than 50 dealers special-

izing in furnishings, lighting, art, textiles, pottery, art glass and vintage clothing in a new, larger exhibition hall. 20thcenturycincinnati.com

Through February 27 **New York City**
Plywood: Material, Process, Form

The Museum of Modern Art exhibition features examples from the '30s through the '50s, including iconic furniture by Alvar Aalto, Charles and Ray Eames, Eero Saarinen and Arne Jacobsen. Pieces by Tapio Wirkkala, Sori Yanagi's Butterfly Stool, a 1943 architectural model for a prefabricated house by Marcel Breuer, experimental plywood designs for the aeronautics industry and photographs illuminating the manufacturing process are also included. More info at moma.org

Through March 25 **Los Angeles**
Living in a Modern Way: California Design, 1930–1965

Furnishings, film, graphic design, industrial design,

fashion and jewelry are the core of an exhibition exploring how California design shaped American material culture before and after WW II. Beginning with 1930s modernism and the contributions of Kem Weber, Paul Frankl, R.M. Schindler and Richard Neutra, it also explores design innovations that used wartime technologies, such as the Eameses' fiberglass and molded plywood chairs. The largest section of the L.A. County Museum of Art show focuses on the home, with its open floor plans, indoor/outdoor living and then-new types of furnishings. lacma.org

Through April 15 **San Diego**
San Diego's Craft Revolution: From Post-War Modern to California Design

The Mingei International Museum hosts the works of local artisans working in ceramics, jewelry, sculpture and more; pacificstandardtime.org.

Through April 30 **Los Angeles**
Indoor Ecologies:
The Evolution of the Eames House Living Room

The original living room contents of the Eameses' Case Study House #8 will be installed at LACMA for this portion of the Pacific Standard Time exhibition; pacificstandardtime.org.

Ongoing **New York City**
Shaping Modernity: Design 1880–1980

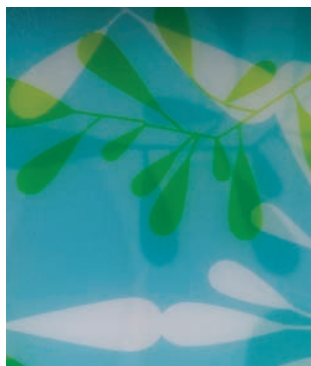
A five-part installation of approximately 300 objects, textiles, graphic design examples and architectural fragments has two sections of particular interest to MC modernists. An overview of the influential Good Design movement (1944–56), includes pieces by Marcel Breuer, Charles and Ray Eames and Hans Wegner, while the section covering the 1960s and '70s showcases modern design made with new materials, colors and forms—i.e. inflatable plastic chairs. moma.org

resources

coloring outside the lines, pp. 16–23

Architects: Donald Roark Architects, Denver, 303.388.3658 ✗ Tomas Hart, The Architecture Studio,

thearch-studio.com ✗ Kitchen: Counters & backsplash in 'Bloom Aqua,' 3-form.com ✗ Refrigerator, subzero-wolf.com ✗ Bath: Tile, bisazza.com ✗ Faucets, phylrich.com ✗ Art hanging system: gallerysystem.com



town & country, pp. 36–46

Designers: Annette Eason, easondesigngroup.com ✗ Daniel

Krog Design, danielkrog.com ✗ General Contractor: Angel Ramirez, Angel Construction, Van Nuys, 818.399.8612 ✗ Cabinet Design: Nick Ganzoni, swisswoodworking.com ✗ Tile and counter contractor: Martin Lozano, Southgate Stone, 323.357.1005 ✗ Electrical contractor: Aaron Abargil, Switch On Electric, Sherman Oaks, 818.744.8269 ✗ Cement slab solution: McGrath Contracting, mcgrathcontracting.com ✗ Landscape: Judith Marchyn, Marchyn Landscape Design, Joshua Tree, Calif., jmarchyn@mac.com, 310.502.1069 ✗ Cabinetry: treefrogveneer.com ✗ containerstore.com ✗ Tile: daltile.com ✗ walkerzanger.com ✗ Appliances: geappliances.com ✗ Counters: caesarstoneus.com ✗ silestoneusa.com ✗ Bath fixtures: americh.com ✗ kohler.com ✗ Furniture: inhousefurniture.com ✗ landoncole.com ✗ Loja Designs, Venice, Calif., 310.450.6940 ✗ hermanmiller.com ✗ Stephen Fleitz, Gecko, Venice, 310.452.1076 ✗ roomandboard.com ✗ linea-inc.com ✗ modernica.net ✗ modernoutdoor.com ✗ Rugs: nanimarquina.com/en ✗ angelaadams.com ✗ Window shades: aeroshadeco.com ✗ Artwork: joycebonnett.com ✗ dannyhellerart.com ✗ blurrything.com ✗ edwardwaltonwilcox.com

the cabin on lake travis, pp. 58–65

Architect: Karen Lantz, enterarchitecture.com ✗

FilterPave: prestogeo.com/filterpave_porous_pavement ✗ Timberline Cool roofing: www.gaf.com/Roofing/Residential/Products/Shingles/Timberline/Timberline-Cool-Series/Timberline-Cool-Series-Shingles.aspx ✗ Icynene insulation: icynene.com ✗ Windows: ramind.com/thinkinggreen.html ✗

Countertops: caesarstoneus.com ✗ Cork Flooring: gerbertltd.com/products/cork.html ✗ Carpet tile: myflor.com ✗ Window shades: theshadestore.com/green-matters/energy-efficient-products ✗ Doors: Allandale, crestviewdoors.com ✗ Dining room furnishings: Richard Schultz 1966 Collection vintage table, richardschultz.com ✗ Eero Saarinen Executive chairs in Star Struck fabric with walnut legs, knoll.com ✗

Kitchen furnishings: Stainless steel table, avancetabco.com

✗ Aro bar stools, bernhardt design.com ✗ Living room

furnishings (on table of contents):

One Night Stand sleeper

sofas, bludot.com ✗ Vlaemisch

Roedeer, various online sites

✗ 'South West' tapestry, Peat Duggins, artpalacegallery.com

✗ Bamboo suite furnishings:

Nook bed, bludot.com ✗

Walnut side table, Karen

Lantz design ✗ Ettore Sottsass

Nine-0 swivel chair, emeco.net ✗ Linens, fullmoonloom

.com ✗ Grotto suite furnishings: Case Study V-leg bed,

modernica.net ✗ Desk & nightstands, Karen Lantz

designs ✗ Linens, fullmoonloom.com ✗ Artwork, Erin

Curtis, erinelizabethcurtis.com ✗ Stone suite furnish-

ings: Simple Bed Frame, westelm.com ✗ Linens,

fullmoonloom.com ✗ Artwork, Joseph Phillips,

josephphillipsart.com



retailers

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